

## Amendments to the Claims

Claim 1 (currently amended): ~~Use of a hydrophilic support derivatised with positively charged groups,~~ A method for sample application to an acidic interval IPG

(immobilised pH gradient) gel, ~~wherein the~~ comprising

(a) placing a hydrophilic support ~~is placed~~ between the cathode and the cathode side of the gel; and

(b) applying said sample onto said hydrophilic support;

wherein said hydrophilic support is derivatised with positively charged groups.

Claim 2 (currently amended): ~~Use according to~~ The method of claim 1, wherein the support is made of regenerated cellulose, dextran, agarose, polyvinylalcohol, polyether sulfone, polysulfone, cellulose acetate, polyurethane, polyamide, nylon or other types of membranes and composite membranes.

Claim 3 (currently amended): ~~Use according to~~ The method of claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the positively charged groups are cation groups.

Claim 4 (currently amended): ~~Use according to~~ The method of claim 3, wherein the cation groups are quaternary groups.

Claim 5 (currently amended): ~~Use according to~~ The method of claim 4, wherein the quaternary groups are QAE or Q groups.

Claim 6 (currently amended): ~~Use according to~~ The method of claim 5, wherein the cation groups are DEAE- groups.

Claim 7 (currently amended): ~~Use according to any of the above claims,~~ The method of claim 1, wherein the IPG gel is a pre-swollen RTG (ready-to-go) gel.

Claim 8 (currently amended): ~~Use according to one or more of the above claims,~~ The method of claim 1, wherein the support is made of regenerated cellulose derivatised with quaternary groups.

Claim 9 (currently amended): ~~Use according to~~ The method of claim 8, wherein the quaternary groups are Q-groups.

Claim 10 (currently amended): ~~Use according to one or more of the above claims,~~ The method of claim 1, wherein the sample is applied in preparative amounts.

Claim 11 (currently amended): ~~Use according to one or more of the above claims,~~ The method of claim 1 as a first step in 2D electrophoresis.

Claim 12 (currently amended): ~~Kit~~ A kit comprising a positively charged sample application support ~~according to any of the above claims~~ and an acidic interval IPG gel or strip.

Claim 13 (currently amended): ~~Kit according to~~ The kit of claim 12, wherein the IPG gel is a RTG-gel.

Claim 14 (currently amended): ~~Kit according to~~ The kit of claim 12, wherein the acidic interval is pH 3.5-5.

Claim 15 (currently amended): ~~Kit according to one or more of the claims 12-14, The~~ kit of claim 12, wherein the support is made of regenerated cellulose derivatised with Q-groups.

Claim 16 (currently amended): ~~Sample A~~ a sample applicator for acidic interval IPG electrophoresis, comprising regenerated cellulose derivatised with cation groups.

Claim 17 (currently amended): ~~Sample applicator according to~~ The sample applicator of claim 16, comprising regenerated cellulose derivatised with Q-groups.